

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Kindly amend the claims, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A sample tab comprising:

a base plate having a top surface and a bottom surface;

a well defined by a top surface of a section ~~of said top surface~~ of said base plate and by a wall extending above said top surface of said base plate, and

a cover plate hingedly connected to said base plate, said cover plate having an open position allowing a sample to be introduced into said well and a closed position wherein a bottom surface of a section of said cover plate covers said well [[.]],

wherein at least a portion of one of said section of said cover plate and said section of said base plate is reflective, transparent or translucent, and at least a portion of the other of said section of said cover plate and said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

3. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate comprises one, or more than one overflow opening, and is surrounded by a containment wall, and wherein said containment wall and said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate define an overflow channel therebetween.

4. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, further comprising a locking member for locking said cover plate to said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.
5. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 3, further comprising a locking member for locking said cover plate to said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.
6. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 5, wherein said locking member comprises a circular ring for frictionally engaging an outer portion of said containment wall when said cover plate is in said closed position, wherein said locking member is disposed on said cover plate.
7. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 4, wherein said locking member comprises one, or more than one clip for locking said cover plate to said base plate in said closed position.
8. (Original) The sample tab of claim 4, wherein said locking member is on said cover plate, said base plate or both said cover plate and said base plate.
9. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 3, wherein said containment wall comprises a sealing member on its upper surface.
10. (Original) The sample tab of claim 9, wherein said sealing member is an O ring.

11. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 9, wherein said sealing member is a pliable material integral with said containment wall.

Claims 12-13 (Cancelled).

14. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 5, wherein said containment wall comprises a sealing member on its upper surface.

15. (Original) The sample tab of claim 14, wherein said sealing member is an O ring.

16. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 14, wherein said sealing member is a pliable material integral with said containment wall.

Claim 17 (Cancelled).

18. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 5, wherein said locking member comprises one, or more than one clip for locking said cover plate to said base plate in said closed position.

19. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 5, wherein said locking member is on said cover plate, said base plate or both said cover plate and said base plate.

20. (Previously Presented) A method for sample analysis, comprising:

- (i) adding a sample into the well of said sample tab defined in claim 1,
- (ii) closing said cover plate of said sample tab,

- (iii) inserting said sample tab into an instrument for analyzing said sample,  
and
- (iv) analyzing said sample.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said cover plate comprises a locking member for locking said cover plate to said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein said sample is either a biological or a non-biological sample.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said sample is a semi-solid or a fluid sample.

Claims 24-26 (Cancelled).

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein in said step of inserting (step iii), said sample tab is placed in a horizontal position within a sample holder of said instrument, and wherein said sample is analyzed by projecting electromagnetic radiation through said well in a direction substantially perpendicular to the position of said sample tab.

28. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate is circular.

29. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 3, wherein said containment wall is circular.

30. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 29, wherein said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate is circular.

31. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and at least a portion of said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

32. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and at least a portion of said section of said base plate is reflective.

33. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is reflective and at least a portion of said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

34. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

35. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and said section of said base plate is reflective.

36. (Previously Presented) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is reflective and said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.